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N E W S   R E L E A S E

# FRANK R. WOLF

Member of Congress  10th District, Virginia



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**OPENING STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN FRANK WOLF**  
**Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Hearing with U.S. Attorney General Holder**

Attorney General Holder, I would like to welcome you to the committee and thank you for your appearance today.

I understand the difficulty of the tasks you have been assigned to complete by the president, especially your assignment to deal with the closing of the Guantanamo Bay facility and potential prosecution of individuals connected with the recent memos on interrogation methods.

These are very dangerous detainees at Guantanamo Bay, including Kahlid Sheik Mohammed, who masterminded the 9/11 attacks that took the lives of 3,000 people and brutally beheaded journalist Daniel Pearl.

I am extremely concerned that the hard lessons from the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, the U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, the U.S.S. Cole attack, and the 9/11 atrocities are being ignored, putting our country at risk of another attack- which could include nuclear, chemical or biological weapons.

Shortly after I returned from a trip to Algeria in 1998 where thousands had been killed by terror attacks and in the wake of the two U.S. embassy bombings in Africa where 267 people were killed – including one of my constituents from McLean serving at the Nairobi embassy – and more than 5,000 were injured, I authored the bill creating a National Commission on Terrorism.

The commission's report in June 2000 provided evidence of the growing threat of international terrorism and the steps needed to combat the threat.

I was disappointed that both the Clinton administration – where you served in the Justice Department when the report was released – and later the Bush administration did not take more seriously the recommendations of the commission.

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What followed were the devastating attacks of September 11, 2001. Thirty of my constituents died in the attack on the Pentagon. Then the war on terrorism was launched in Afghanistan. The first person killed in Afghanistan was a CIA employee who resided in my district.

Now our country could be faced with the real prospect that those associated with the terrorist attacks on our country could be brought to a large urban center in eye's view of where a commercial jet-turned missile exploded into the Pentagon on 9/11.

On March 13 I sent you a letter (attached) asking a series of questions regarding the security and logistical concerns associated with transferring Guantanamo Bay detainees to the jail and courthouse in Alexandria, Virginia, and I look forward to receiving your response shortly. The Zacharias Moussaoui trial in Alexandria took over four years, at a public expense in multi-million dollars, and presented a nightmare security scenario. An equally difficult situation would exist in the Southern District of New York if trials were to occur there.

I will be giving you a second letter (attached) today asking additional questions on the possible dangers the administration should consider if you decide to transfer Guantanamo detainees to population centers and the ramifications of granting these individuals access to civilian courts. I am also submitting both letters for the committee record and asked that you respond not only to me, but also to the committee.

As you move forward in responding to the president's executive order and present policy options for the release or transfer or prosecution of detainees, I believe there are serious issues involving the safety and security of millions of American citizens that must be addressed.

Before making your decision, I believe the Justice Department should meet with those whose loved ones were killed in the 9/11 attacks and other attacks, including families of our military members killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and ask their perspective on the fate of these detainees, especially the detainees who played a lead role in carrying out the attacks.

It is baffling to me that the option of transferring detainees to federal court sites in urban areas such as Alexandria would even be considered. I went to Alexandria this past Tuesday and saw for myself the proximity to the federal courthouse of the Westin Hotel and the Patent and Trademark office, both high pedestrian traffic areas. There is also a Metro station nearby as well as an apartment complex and major vehicle routes.

Again, I appreciate the challenges with which you are faced. I have some questions on these issues which I will ask when the chairman proceeds to that part of the hearing.

Before I get into the issues surrounding the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility, I'd like to raise with you the issue of interrogation policy. I understand the president has stated that he will defer to you in determining whether to prosecute federal officials for the implementation of now-prohibited interrogation policies. This represents a dramatic shift from

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the president's and his chief of staff's earlier statements that I worry would have a chilling effect on current and future administration officials and our federal workforce.

1. Will you pursue the prosecution of federal employees or administration officials, and, if so, what criteria will you use to determine grounds for prosecution?
2. Is it true that the administration is suppressing additional memos that demonstrate the effectiveness of interrogation techniques as well as document Bush administration efforts to correct problems? If so, by whom and why?
3. Did these portions show that the interrogations resulted in valuable intelligence that stopped other terrorist attack?
4. Why would the administration want to hide the information on the intelligence gained from the interrogations when you the information on the interrogation methods themselves was readily divulged?

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